

RESOLUTION NO. _____, SERIES 2018

A RESOLUTION HONORING ANTHONY FRENCH, SR. AND MARY RUTH FRENCH BY DEDICATING AMY AVENUE BETWEEN WEST MARKET STREET AND HERMAN STREET TO BE NAMED “ANTHONY FRENCH, SR. AND MARY RUTH FRENCH WAY” IN THEIR HONOR.

SPONSORED BY: COUNCILMEMBERS CHERI BRYANT HAMILTON, BARBARA SHANKLIN AND MARY WOOLRIDGE

WHEREAS, Mary Ruth Ramsey Stith French was the youngest of four children born to Charles and Mary Ellen Ramsey in Helena, Kentucky; and

WHEREAS, Ruth French attended school in Mayslick, Kentucky in a school system that was segregated until her freshman year of high school; and

WHEREAS, Ruth French attended college at the Mercy Hospital School of Nursing in Portsmouth, Ohio from 1960–1963 and passed her exams to become a registered nurse; and

WHEREAS, in 1963, Ruth French became the first Black registered nurse on staff at Hayswood Hospital in Maysville, Kentucky; and

WHEREAS, in 1964, Ruth French moved to Louisville and was married to Robert Stith until his passing in 1998, and they had two daughters and one son who gave them ten grandchildren and one great grandchild; and

WHEREAS, in 1971, Ruth French began working in dialysis and continued in that area of healthcare until her retirement in 2004; and

WHEREAS, Ruth French also serves her community as the parish nurse at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, board member of the Shawnee Neighborhood Association and organizer of its annual community health fair, member of the District 5 Neighborhood Advisory Committee, planning team for the Shawnee Christian

Healthcare Center located at French Plaza, organizer of the community's "Shawnee Garden of Principles;" and

WHEREAS, in 2003, Ruth French married Anthony French, Sr. and expanded her family by adding four children, seven grandchildren, and two great grandchildren;

WHEREAS, Anthony French, Sr. was one of fifteen children born to Rev. and Mrs. (Lucy) John Thomas French in Louisville; and

WHEREAS, Anthony French spent his childhood in Louisville and graduated from Central High School in 1961; and

WHEREAS, after graduation, Anthony French enlisted in the Naval Reserves in Norfolk where he ultimately attended Naval Boot Camp; and

WHEREAS, Anthony French then enlisted in active duty and spent over six years in the Navy where he enjoyed seeing many places around the world; and

WHEREAS, during his military commitment, Anthony French married in 1965 and became the father of a daughter and three sons; and

WHEREAS, after his time in the Navy, Anthony French began his career at Phillip Morris which spanned more than 30 years; and

WHEREAS, Anthony French ultimately became a plant manager for Phillip Morris in Louisville and later his expertise was needed at Phillip Morris locations in North Carolina and Virginia as general manager of manufacturing and leaf processing; and

WHEREAS, upon retiring from Phillip Morris in 1998, Anthony French moved back to Louisville and made his home in West Louisville where he bought and restored a Doerhoefer house; and

WHEREAS, Anthony French then bought and restored the Shawnee Shopping Center on Amy Avenue, which he renamed French Plaza, providing the only retail shopping plaza in the neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, for many years, Anthony and Ruth French have generously donated space in the French Plaza to house the LMPD 2nd Police Division Substation under the Shawnee Weed and Seed grant, the Shawnee Neighborhood Association office and a meeting space for the SNA and other community meetings, the Shawnee Christian Healthcare Center; and

WHEREAS, Anthony French served as a member of several boards and organizations, including the Board of Directors for the Urban League, Louisville Development Bancorp, Inc., Louisville Community Development Bank, Jefferson County Merit Board, Economic Development Transitional Team for Louisville, Louisville Chamber of Commerce, Advisory Board of Kentucky State University, Board of Directors of the Boys' Club of America, Shawnee Neighborhood Plan advisory committee, West Market Street Corridor Improvement Plan committee, and Chairman of the Board for TARC; and

WHEREAS, Ruth French is a recipient of both the Bell Award and the Norton Church and Health Ministry Nurse of the Year Award; and

WHEREAS, Anthony French received the YMCA Black Achiever Award in Harlem in 1977 and again in Louisville in 1982 and helped lead the Wet/Dry campaign in the Shawnee neighborhood in 2007; and

WHEREAS, Anthony and Ruth French were jointly awarded the Molly Leonard Community Service Award by District 5 Councilwoman Cheri Bryant Hamilton for their

outstanding public service and commitment to the economic revitalization of the West End; and

WHEREAS, Anthony and Ruth are to be commended for helping to start a new Christmas tradition by helping bring holiday spirit to their beloved neighborhood by organizing a “Light Up Shawnee” community event; and

WHEREAS, the Louisville Metro Council wishes to honor Anthony and Ruth French for their long-standing and on-going service to Louisville and especially to the revitalization of the Shawnee neighborhood by dedicating Amy Avenue from West Market Street to Herman Street in their honor.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF THE LOUISVILLE/JEFFERSON COUNTY METRO GOVERNMENT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION I: Anthony and Ruth French’s continued and dedicated service and commitment to Louisville Metro is hereby recognized with the placement of honorary street signs on Amy Avenue at the corners of West Market Street and Herman Street in Louisville, Kentucky, and so designated as “Anthony French, Sr. and Mary Ruth French Way.”

SECTION II: The Department of Public Works is hereby directed to move forward with the fabrication of three honorary signs and the installation of two honorary signs upon the passage of this Resolution and the receipt of funds to cover the expense. The additional honorary sign will be presented to Anthony and Ruth French.

SECTION III: This Resolution shall take effect upon its passage and approval.

H. Stephen Ott
Metro Council Clerk

David James
President of the Council

Greg Fischer
Mayor

Approval Date

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:

Michael J. O'Connell
Jefferson County Attorney

By: _____

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